The Evening Times

FRANK A. MUNSEY

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A Disappointing Port.

Dalny, the new Russian port in the Far East, projected by Finance Minister Witte, doesn't turn out to be the "good thing" that many thought it would. There was no natural harbor, to begin with. It had to be constructed. After construction it had to be connected with the sea by a canal two miles long. Then the entrance to the canal had to be cleared of rocks and dredged to prevent larger vessels from drifting upon sand banks when the wind blew from the north. On top of it all the new breakwater was found to keep ice floes in position, where formerly they were carried out to sea by the winds, so that the principal object of constructing the harbor at Dalny, that of securing a port open the year around, has apparently been defeated. And all this has so far entailed an expenditure of nearly $7,000,000. No wonder the critics of Witte's policy are gaining recruits every day.

The Cake-Walk in France.

The introduction and unexpected popularity of the American cake-walk dance and music in Paris is editorially discussed by the "Figaro." The "danse du gateau" is not confined to the music halls, either; it forms the amusement of fashionable society in the most reactionary and historical chateaus in Touraine and Normandie.

It is, we suppose, only an incident of the "American invasion," yet no student of social evolution can afford hereafter to fail in making a note of it. According to the writer in the "Figaro," French composers should bestir themselves and give rhythmical cake-walk music what, in his opinion, it lacks, and what he calls the "galbe Francaise," or swelling contour, or entasis. For all practical purposes, we confess, "All Coons Look Alike to Me" fills the bill, without Gallic frills.

A Chicago Problem.

There is a three-cornered trouble in a Chicago school, made up of a bath tub, a teacher, and parental authority. In the basement of the school is a bath tub; in the tub such scholars as come to school unclean are duly scrubbed by a woman hired for the purpose. The mother of three children sent home for untidiness by the principal of the school admits that she does not bathe her children at home—for fear of colds—and she objects to having them bathed at the schoolhouse, because cold water is used.

The children were told that they must take their scrubbing, either at home or in school, and the mother affirms her right to protect her children from cold baths without forfeiting their right to attend school. The principal has explained to her the healthfulness of cold baths, and adduced the Englishman's fondness for this form of amusement—but all in vain. The mother says she will carry the case to the authorities.

There are mysterious features in this situation. We are not told whether the mother of the children actually affirms her intention of letting them go indefinitely without baths; and it may well be supposed that a child who has not had a scrubbing for several months would catch cold if the accumulation of soil were suddenly removed. But even so, it is possible that the cold would be preferable to continued and unlimited dirt. It seems as if the experiment ought to be tried, for the benefit of the community, especially if there are many such cases in any neighborhood.

Another mysterious thing is the mother's apparent conviction that baths are necessarily taken in cold water. Are there no cook stoves in Chicago, no kettles wherein water may be heated, no tubs which may in case of need serve the purpose of a bath room? It may not be right for the principal to take those children and have them cleaned in cold water against parental wishes; but it does seem as if the thing might be managed at home.

General Chaffee is right in believing that the sultan business cannot be carried on consistently under the American flag.

That unsatisfied, century-old mortgage found in Philadelphia certainly didn't belong to Mrs. Hetty Green.

Fighting yellow fever on the Panama coast doesn't impress our bluejackets as the pleasantest way of displaying the red badge of courage.

Our novelists are now leading the "American invasion of England," and ink flows like water in the conflict.

President Castro's proclamation of victory over the Venezuelan insurgents reads so like a circus poster as to encourage skepticism.

This is a mighty good time to stand aside and let the Wall Street "professionals" settle their differences among themselves.

Whenever J. Pierpont Morgan catches cold the stock speculators shiver.

His new position as conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra may give Walter Damrosch a chance to unload that Victor Herbert music which a Gotham court refused to hear.

Lieutenant Governor Tillman's methods of securing first-page advertising are more effective than admirable.

Miss Stone announces her intention of repaying only the money contributed by those persons who financially embarrassed themselves on her account; which will doubtless cause a great many people to feel embarrassed.

It is fortunate for the dramatic effect that it was Princeton's football captain and not some unknown stableman who got the chance to buck against the tiger.

Senator Platt is reported as saying that at their recent conference he and Governor Odell "cussed and discussed." It would interest the country greatly to know just what it was that they cussed.

Hall Caine's typhoid fever turns out to be dyspepsia. This fact is said to have been ascertained by a skillful diagnosis of his novels.

All the prisoners recently disappeared from the Tucson (Ariz.) jail. It is not known where they went, but those who have visited the region think it is possible that they evaporated.

And now there's a "double" of Carrie Nation on the warpath. As if one wasn't enough for this weary world!

Let us hope that the contemplated "higher standard for lawyers" will not mean an elevation of their scale of fees.

Senator-elect Smoot, an apostle in the Mormon Church, will have to permit the American people to check up his wife inventory.

"A MAD WORLD, MY MASTERS."

Maud Muller Still at Work.

"MAUD MULLER, on a summer's day," as Whittier has told us, "raked the meadows sweet with hay," and it is not difficult to imagine how pretty a picture Maud made as the judge came riding up the country road in her direction. But just what should have made J. Adams Snyder, of Brooklyn, so irresistible under similar conditions is "one of those things no fellow can find out." Nevertheless he won Miss Gertrude Maynard's heart by his rakish performance. He was in the country and at work in the hay field by his physician's orders, his health having failed, and he gave Miss Maynard a swig of buttermilk from his jug. She liked the whole thing so well that she came back the next day—and they are to be married about Christmas time. And now I suppose there'll be an epidemic of Brooklyn men doing the Maud Muller act.

A Police "Corps d'Elite."

I am not, to my knowledge, predisposed toward that strange American malady known as Anglomania, yet it seems to me it would be a good thing if our gilded youth would imitate those swagger British sportsmen who have gone to hunt bandits in the Sicilian wilds. They might form a sort of "corps d'elite" attachment to the police departments of our great cities and do a lot of brilliant and exciting work in tracking our great criminals to their lairs. The new fad resolves itself so simply, don't you know. The wearied young clubmen clamor for perilous detective work. They'll do it for nothing—and, probably, do it very well, indeed. The latest English fashion deserves to be encouraged.

Don't Be Too Leisurely.

THERE'S a deal of wisdom in the old adage which says, "Marry in haste and you'll repent at leisure," yet there is also such a thing as being too deucedly deliberate in making up your mind to take the fearsome leap into the sea of matrimony. This truth is illustrated in the case of Dr. Price, of Germantown, Pa., who loved Miss Susan Trumbull devotedly, but waited forty years to make her his wife. Then, pathetically enough, she died within six months after their wedding day, thus sadly completing a melancholy story that should, by rights, have been a story of many years of happiness. The moral of this genuine little tragedy is too plain to be misunderstood.

For a Quiet and Restful Life.

IT would seem to be in order to extend congratulations and the best of good wishes to Lord Acheson, son of the English Earl of Gosford, and to Count Herman Hatzfeldt, of the German diplomatic service, who intend to follow the Duke of Teck's example and abandon feverish lives of aristocratic idleness for the peaceful and industrious existence of stock exchange speculators. Young men fired by so commendable an ambition to earn their own living cannot but succeed in life. The only peril to be dreaded is that of an occasional relapse into their former habits which may threaten to put giddy ideas into the heads of the otherwise demure and innocent stock brokers, whose frugal and toilsome habits are proverbial.

The Mothers Know Better.

UNDOUBTEDLY the Rev. Father Angelo, of Bayonne, N. J., spoke for the good of his parishioners when he advised mothers not to permit their daughters to spoon in dark corners, and to insist, besides, upon all the gas jets being lit and the girl's parents present throughout the visits of the young men. But aren't you sure that the mothers, knowing certain things from their own courting days, snickered just a bit at this advice from the good priest? How many matches would be made if these conditions prevailed, do you think? And what man would muster up courage enough to propose to a girl under a full flare of gas, papa and mamma viewing his performance with critics' eyes? There are some things impossible to humanity, and Father Angelo must not ask too much of his people.

A Cheerful Prophet Wanted.

SAILORS are proverbially superstitious, and for this reason I think that Prof. Gustav Meyer, described as "the young American astrologer," is taking a cruel advantage of their weakness in his predictions of a great naval disaster within the next forty days. This period just covers the time of the American naval maneuvers in the Caribbean Sea, and Prof. Meyer is dooming hundreds of our bluejackets to sleepless nights by his gratuitous soothsaying of evil import. Won't some more light-hearted and optimistic prophet please step to the front? Our warships are just about to sail for the scene of action, and we'd like to give them a reasonably cheerful send-off.

How About the Other Two?

MISS GEORGIE MAUD MARSHALL—that was—of Brooklyn, who chose to be married to James W. Hutt, jr., on November 13, explained her indifference to the superstition involved by stating that her mother and grandmother were married on that day of the month, and both of them had singularly prosperous and happy lives. This is all very well as far as it goes, but Miss Georgie forgot to tell us how the superstition worked in the case of her father and grandfather. The returns, therefore, are not yet complete.

"JACQUES OF ARDEN."

THE MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC WORLDS.

ERNEST VAN DYCK, the tenor, did not contemplate a musical career until after he had graduated in law and begun to practice. Gounod heard him sing and persuaded him to give up the law and study music. He did so and attained his first success with the Lamoureaux Orchestra.

* * *

DE WOLF HOPPER, who is starring in a comic opera, the libretto of which is based upon "Pickwick Papers," is playing in some of the cities of Illinois and Ohio. At the commencement of the season it was generally supposed that a star of the magnitude of Hopper would at once show his new opera in the important theatrical centers of the country, but so far the comedian and his associates in "Mr. Pickwick" have kept in that part of the country where the grass is popularly supposed to grow in greater profusion and to greater heights than in the busy towns where the clang of the cable car and the ambulance is more familiar than the tinkle of the cow bell. With Hopper in "Mr. Pickwick" are Mr. and Mrs. Digby Bell (Laura Joyce), Grant Stewart and a number of other well-known players.

* * *

JAMES K. HACKETT and William Faversham will commence tonight in New York, a "matinee idol" rivalry that promises to become unusually interesting before the feminine portion of Gotham's theatergoers render their decision. Mr. Hackett will appeal for patronage with a dramatization of Winston Churchill's novel, "The Crisis," and Mr. Faversham will use Henry V. Esmond's play, "Imprudence." Mr. Hackett has tested "The Crisis," for a number of months, and has found it suited to his purposes, while Mr. Faversham has presented "Imprudence," in only a half-dozen unimportant cities. Mr. Hackett's chief support is Charlotte Walker, who has done clever and promising work during the few seasons she has been on the stage. Mr. Faversham's leading woman is Fay Davis, a Bostonian, who, when she found American theatrical managers were not disposed to give her the chance she deemed her talents merited, went to London, where she quickly became a favorite.

* * *

ELEANOR ROBSON'S season in "Audrey" is to begin tonight at Richmond, and after a week in the principal cities of Virginia, the dramatic version of Mary Johnston's story will be taken to the Madison Square Theater, New York, where it will remain for an indefinite period.

* * *

MARIA BARRIENTOS, a young Spanish girl, who is now the prima donna of the grand opera at Buenos Ayres, is said to possess one of the finest soprano voices the musical world has ever known. She has been singing since she was nine years old, at which time she created a remarkable impression in a production of "Traviata."

* * *

LEONCAVALLO superintended the recent production of his opera, "I Pagliacci," at Paris. His new composition, "Roland," will be completed by next spring, and it is expected that the initial performance of the opera will take place some time in April. The chief character in the story is Burgomaster Rathenau, and one of the scenes will be the demolition of the Poland statue by Markgrave Friedrich.

* * *

RICHARD MANSFIELD will play in Cincinnati this week, Annie Russell in Buffalo and Rochester; Lulu Glaser will sing "Dolly Varden" songs in Philadelphia; E. H. Sothern will play "If I Were King" in St. Paul and Minneapolis; Hehrietta Crosman is to appear in Hartford, Conn., tonight; Charles Hawtrey is at the Boston Museum; W. H. Crane's "David Harum" is the offering at the Syndicate theater in Milwaukee; Eleanor Duse is to appear in Baltimore; De Wolfe Hopper with his "Mr. Pickwick" company will entertain the patrons of McCauley's Theater, Louisville; Mrs. Campbell will be in Boston; James O'Neill in Providence, while Alice Fisher will present "Mrs. Jack" in Albany, and a number of New York State towns during the week; Frank Daniels will give "Miss Simplicity" in Chicago, while Elsie de Wolfe is to be seen in New Orleans; Amelia Bingham will appear in Baltimore tonight; "Ben Hur" will be played in Toronto, while "The Rogers Brothers in Harvard" are to be in Boston; "The Sleeping Beauty and the Beast" is to be produced in Pittsburg during the week, preparatory to an extended engagement in Philadelphia; Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Goodwin are in Chicago, while Joseph Jefferson is playing "Rip Van Winkle" in Brooklyn.

* * *

GAILHARD, conductor of the orchestra at the grand opera, Paris, may resign within the next few weeks as he is said to be persona non grata, not only with the members of the opera, but with critics, and the public as well. Capoul, the assistant director, will probably go to the Opera Comique.

* * *

MRS. FISKE and Blanche Bates are to share the interest of the theatergoers of the country Wednesday night, as both have arranged to present their new plays on that night. Mrs. Fiske has played "Mary of Magdala" in Milwaukee and Chicago, but New Yorkers will get their first glimpse of the Heyse drama on the evening that Blanche Bates makes her first appearance in Washington, on any stage, in David Belasco and John Luther Long's new Japanese drama, "The Darling of the Gods."

* * *

VIOLA ALLEN'S performance of Roma in Hall Caine's play, "The Eternal City," which is favorably known to local patrons of the drama, is to be seen for the first time in New York tonight. Miss Allen's press agent has been indefatigable in creating the impression that Mr. Caine has altered his heroine's morals since the play received its first presentation in this city, but as a matter of fact the only changes that have been made in the piece are in the third act, in the trial scene.

"Of Making Many Books There Is No End."

Henry Norman in America.

It is not generally known that Henry Norman, author of "All the Russias," is a graduate of Harvard. He is an Englishman, and was educated in France, but chose to take his degree in America. It was he who started the agitation which resulted in making Niagara Falls a State reservation. He is a Liberal, and has represented South Wolverhampton in Parliament for two years, but is best known as an authority on the affairs of Asia and the far East.

Johnson in Scotland.

Letters have been found in an old London mansion belonging to an historic family which seem to indicate that even the industrious Boswell did not get hold of all the details of the life of Samuel Johnson. There has always been some curiosity as to the lexicographer's whereabouts during the years 1745 and 1746, the time of the Jacobite uprising. These letters, written from the midst of the proceedings in Scotland, more than hint at Johnson's presence as a recruit, though he seems not to have been particularly useful in a military way, and, indeed, to have become somewhat disgusted with the whole Scotch race. The description of an oddity from Lichfield, "a strange mixture of learning and grossness," with huge frame, uncouth manners, and dress neither military nor civilian, certainly fits Johnson like a glove; his home was in Lichfield, and his sympathies, as is well known, strongly with the Stuarts.

Virchow's Successor.

Dr. Orth, who has succeeded Virchow at the University of Berlin, is said to be somewhat rough in his manners and most serious-minded. A former pupil says that during five semesters he did not once see Orth smile.

An Old Story Spoiled.

Of course, many things are excused to Philadelphia, but the spoiling of good stories is not one of them. The "Ledger," of that city, has attempted to fasten upon Dr. Henry Van Dyke an anecdote not less than forty years old, the professor himself having but just turned the half-century mark. It says that on a tour through the South he came across an old "mammy" smoking a pipe, and warned her that she could not expect to go to heaven with a tobacco-scented breath, whereupon she replied: "When I die, I 'spects to lose my breath." Aside from the fact that this story was told of Sojourner Truth, famous as a speaker in anti-slavery meetings before the war, and may be older yet, Dr. Van Dyke is not inclined to preach against smoking, as one of the stories in his book, "The Ruling Passion," distinctly proves. If anecdotes out of the Ark are to be attached to twentieth century people, they should at least fit.

Author of "Miss Petticoats" Again.

"Dwight Tilton," author of "Miss Petticoats," has written a second book, entitled, "On Satan's Mount," the scene of which is laid in this city.

Gaelic Folk-Lore.

Some interesting information on Gaelic folk-lore is given in Dr. R. C. Maclagan's work on "The Evil Eye in the Western Highlands." The peasants of that region believe implicitly in the evil eye, and, as the following stories show, there may be reasons why the astute encourage this belief:

"The danger of refusing a request is great, not so much from the purely Christian charity point of view, as from that of escaping the Evil Eye. A native of Knapdale, a believer, tells of a woman notorious in that neighborhood. She went to a farmer for a barrel of potatoes, which he refused her. No more was said, but she had not long gone when the best horse he had fell down and could not rise. It was foaming at the mouth. A man skilled in counteracting the Evil Eye was consulted, and declared that the horse had been injured by it. Having been informed by the farmer that he had refused to give a barrel of potatoes to the woman, he said it was that that had done the harm. His advice was a little peculiar, not in that he recommended the sending of the potatoes to the woman, but that they should be sent on the injured horse, with evidently a view of its cure. The potatoes were got into a bag, the bag lifted on the horse's back, and away it went quite briskly, and they were delivered at the woman's house, and thereafter the horse was quite well.

"Drovers are not, of course, complete strangers in the districts in which they do business, but as a class they are looked on with some suspicion. Thus we are told: 'Some drovers are possessed of the Evil Eye, and in consequence it is reckoned foolish not to sell any animals to them if they appear anxious to have them.' The reciter's father had a good cow, and some drovers coming about wanted to buy her. His father refused to sell. The drovers persisted, but still met with a refusal. At last the drovers left, but shortly after the cow sickened, died, and nothing remained of her value to the owner but her skin."

A Naturalist's Boyhood.

Ernest Thompson-Seton has not much of a reputation in Manitoba, his childhood home, which is not, perhaps, surprising, considering the proverb about a prophet's honor in his own country. In boyhood he worked on a ranch in Carberry, Manitoba, and was known as "that Thompson boy, laziest fellow I ever saw." He had a passion for nature, and one of his old acquaintances says: "If a mouse ran out of a grain stack and he was feeding the thresher, everything must stop while the Thompson boy followed the mouse to its lair and studied it. The old-timers will tell you that they wouldn't pay him $10 a month."

TO THE CHRYSANTHEMUM.

Lovely Queen of Autumn flowers, regal
In thy stately beauty,
In thy pride disdaining rivals near thy
firm-entrenched throne,
When the smile of summer's over, when
its blooms have come to cover,
Then forth shines thy golden glory
standing in its state alone,
Fall's gem, the Chrysanthemum.

Not thine carnations' phases, nor the
dainty white of lilies;
Not upon thee lies the fragrance of
the purple violet's scent;
Not thine, carnations' phases, nor the
humble grace of daisies,
Nor the lightness and the sweetness by
the warmth of summer blent,
Not this, the Chrysanthemum.

No mere fragile bud of greatness; strong
and hardy is thy beauty,
In thy majesty all fairness, in thy
strength a charm most dear;
Type of this great age of ours, force,
and power bound with flowers,
Welcome, lovely Queen of Autumn,
stateliest bloom of all the year.
Golden-leaved Chrysanthemum!

—Baltimore American.

JESTS IN SEASON.

Pursued in His Sleep.

Dusty—Gee! W'ot yer s'pose is the matter wit' Weary? He never sleeps any more.

Rusty—'Fraid to. 'Fraid he'll dream he's workin.'—Baltimore American.

Foxy Man.

"She and her husband get along splendidly together."

"Yes; he pretends he wants everything he doesn't, and doesn't want anything he does, so he has the satisfaction of having his own way, and she of thinking that he never has it, and there's no chance for argument."—Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.

Idiomatic Blunder.

"Mr. Henpecque, let me introduce you to the Count De Dippee."

"Ah, eet ze honor to meet a musician. I hear, sar, zat you an' your family play ze music."

"Why, I don't know the first thing about music."

"Why, I hear eet all around zat you 'plays second fiddle' to your wife!"—Baltimore Herald.

In A. D. 2000.

"So you wish to marry my son, do you, young woman?"

Young Woman—I do, madam.

Fond Mother—Well, er—is your income sufficient to support him in the condition of innocuous desuetude to which he has always been accustomed?—Philadelphia Inquirer.

IN TOTAL DARKNESS ⁘ ⁘ A STORY OF THRILLING ADVENTURE ⁘ ⁘ By CECIL HAYTER

EXCHANGE! Hello! hello! Are you there? Nine-three-seven-six, please."

Then, as is customary with the telephone system, there ensued a prolonged silence, during which Kershaw waited with the receiver to his ear wondering whether the presiding deity at Central was trying to switch him through or was deep in the sixteenth chapter of a new serial. That something had been done in answer to his appeal was clear, for there came over the wire the muffled whirr of another call, scraps of conversation—a female voice high pitched in argument—and a sound like footsteps on a stone-flagged passage. Then came a lull, and another scrap of conversation between two people unknown reached him.

"Yes, that's settled—don off by the boat train—I shall be at the station."

"Does he carry them on him?"

"Yes."

"Who takes charge of the matter?"

"The Spider himself."

"Whew! It's a bigger thing than I thought, then. Where will he——"

"He'll start from Charing Cross and travel right through, if necessary."

"Then a quarter of an hour before the train leaves tonight, eh! Oh! and I say—— (angrily) No! don't cut me off yet. Here, Central, I haven't finished"—and then once more silence.

Kershaw dropped the receiver and consulted with himself. He had listened half unconsciously to the opening sentences; but the mention of one thing—"The Spider"—kept him on the stretch to hear all he possibly could.

He sat down on the nearest chair and whistled softly to himself.

"I wonder," he said under his breath—and again—"I wonder.

"Upon my word, I'm not a great believer in fate or chance, or whatever you call it, as a rule, but, unless I am very much mistaken, that telephone, and the delays and imperfections thereof, have saved my life. The Spider, too—how the deuce has the thing leaked out?"

Forgetting all about the message he had originally intended sending, Kershaw left the club and walked back to his own rooms. Once sure of absolute privacy, he opened a dispatch box and took from it a large, bulky, official-looking envelope; ten minutes' hard work and the manipulation of much stationery enabled him to lay by its side an almost exact duplicate, on the bottom corner of which, for security's sake, he placed a small private mark.

Then, taking from a cupboard a heavy fur-lined overcoat, he ruthlessly slit up one of the seams with a penknife, just below where the sleeve joined on; into this opening he slipped the original envelope and stitched it carefully in position.

The duplicate, together with a handful of unimportant documents, he replaced in the dispatch box and began changing into traveling clothes. He had barely completed this when there came a knock at the door and Sir Edgar Trailton, a reserved, distinguished looking man of fifty or so, entered.

"Nearly ready, Kershaw?" said he.

"Quite," was the prompt answer.

The elder man looked at him keenly. "You fully understand the importance of those papers? They must reach the embassy at Constantinople, intact, at any cost. There has been too much pilfering and tampering with the mail bags lately. If those particular dispatches were to fall into wrong hands I am authorized to tell you plainly that it means war—war of a very grim order just when we want it least, also their value in the hands of unscrupulous people would be calculated in sums to make a Rothschild envious."

Kershaw hesitated.

"Well," said Sir Edgar hastily, "what is it? Do you want to back out of the responsibility?"

"Not in the least, but quite by chance I overheard a few words on the telephone just now, and I believe the man they call The Spider has got wind of the matter and is going to have a try for them."

Sir Edgar looked grave and his face hardened. "That man is the fiend incarnate. He gives more trouble and is more dangerous than half the secret services of Europe."

"I have heard a lot about him, but have never seen him. Could you give me any information?"

"That's the extraordinary thing. The man is alway cropping up and causing infinite difficulties, but no one seems to have the vaguest idea what he is like. He is French by birth—the most cunning and dangerous brute in creation, and stone blind. So much I know—no more."

"Blind!" said Kershaw in astonishment.

"Absolutely, though few people, however, guessed it. He has a lot of paid spies to do rough work. But, in spite of his infirmity, he always carries through his big coups alone and unaided, trusting no one and keeping his own counsel."

Kershaw felt slightly skeptical, and realizing that time was running short, if he wished to dine before his journey, he said good-by to Sir Edgar Trailton, and had his luggage put on a hansom.

There were not many passengers by the mail, and Kershaw could, if he had chosen, have had a carriage to himself. But an officious porter had already placed his things in a compartment in which there was an old clergyman already seated, puffing away at a cigar and reading a yellow book with an air of great enjoyment.

He looked up as Kershaw got in and then resumed his reading, and the train started off.

After some time Kershaw pulled out his case and lit a cigarette. The old clergyman held out his hand with a smile. "Excuse me," said he, "but could you give me a light?"

Kershaw handed him the still flaming match, which the other took, and relit his cigar. Then a strange little accident happened. The man threw away the match, which, being nearly burnt down, stuck slightly to his fingers, so that, instead of going on to the floor as intended, it fell on the cushion of the seat opposite, still alight. Now that in itself was nothing, but what was extraordinary was that the old man picked up his book and resumed his reading, with the match burning the seat almost under his nose.

Kershaw was about to give an exclamation of surprise, when suddenly Sir Edgar's words came back to him, "The man is stone blind." In a flash he saw the whole thing. The book, the little bit of bravado in asking for a light, the disguise, were all simply a ruse. The man was blind; but had it not been for the trivial accident of the falling match Kershaw would have staked his last farthing against such a supposition. Obviously the thing to do was not to let the man know he was discovered. Very cautiously he stretched out his walking stick and extinguished the fire before the cloth began to smell. So far, so good, and he was holder of a trump card.

It was a nasty, choppy night when the train drew up alongside the quay; the wind, blowing a quarter gale, whistled and moaned through the boat's shrouds, and made the draughty customs sheds quiver with each fierce gust.

Kershaw snatched up his things, beckoned a porter, and hurried on board. He had had thoughts of spending his time in the smoking room, but on second consideration he thought he would be more secure in a private stateroom, so he took possession of a deck cabin, and, having seen his luggage carefully deposited therein, he bolted the door, placed his portmanteau against it, wrapped himself in his rug, and settled down.

The tramp, tramp of many feet, the moaning of the wind, and the cries of the deck hands getting the luggage on board, formed themselves into a monotonous chorus, and he dozed over his novel; then came the sharp ting, ting of the engine room signals, the faint, continuous rhythm of the engines themselves, gathering in speed and force as the boat crept slowly into the heavy weather outside. The book slid from his hand and he fell into a sleep only rendered deeper by the heavy rolling of the vessel.

When he woke it was with a start. The cabin was in total darkness, though he had purposely left the electric light full on. It was so black that it was impossible to distinguish even the barest outlines of anything. Yet he was convinced that he was no longer alone in the room. Some one had forced the door, and was groping about quite close to him.

He held his breath and listened, but the din outside was too great. Cautiously he stretched out a hand. Then steadying himself as well as he could, he moved round inch by inch toward the door. He was in a way at a disadvantage—The Spider was blind, and, therefore, accustomed to darkness, while he was heavily handicaped by it. But of one thing he felt certain, that though some one had entered unawares, they were not going to get out without trying conclusions with him.

The ship lurched and backed, and every now and then came the clatter of something falling. The darkness, to his excited nerves, seemed to grow thicker every second—and he never knew but what he might feel a few inches of cold steel in his ribs before he could move hand or foot. For The Spider's senses were so marvelously acute that it was quite impossible he should not have been able to detect Kershaw's movement.

Then there came a lurch and a stagger heavier than usual as a big mass of water struck the boat—something swayed forward and touched him lightly; but it was sufficient; he clutched at it with both hands and brought up his knee with a jerk—it was no time for niceties. There was a crack—a stifled cry—and the tinkle of steel; he had snapped the man's forearm above the wrist joint—the next instant they were both rolling on the floor.

Kershaw picked himself up, groped hurriedly for the electric light switch and flooded the cabin with light, but too late—the door was swinging wide, and The Spider had vanished, broken arm and all, leaving as traces of his visit the dispatch-box neatly severed at the hinges, and on the floor a business-like looking knife. Kershaw glanced round for his fur coat, and heaved a sigh of relief—that at any rate was safe, with its valuable contents stowed away in the lining. But the dummy envelope was gone from the dispatch-box.

He rang for the steward and, without giving any reasons, asked him to find out for him the whereabouts of the clergyman who had come aboard. The man went, but returned in a few minutes saying that there was no such person to be found. The Spider had vanished. For once in his life he had made a complete failure.

As the train was moving out of the station en route for Paris, however, Kershaw saw a youngish-looking man, dressed as a bicyclist, being helped into the train. He had his arm in a sling, and was explaining to an acquaintance that he had slipped on the wet decks and sprained his wrist.

Kershaw also noticed, with grim amusement, that in the man's left brast pocket there were outward and visible signs of a bulky package of sorts, and blessed the much-abused telephone system of his native land.